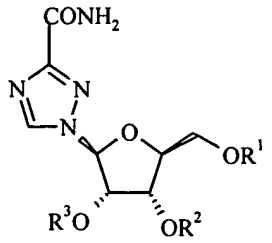
We claim:

1. A compound according to formula I



(II)

wherein (i) R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, C_{1-10} acyl, C_{1-10} alkoxycarbonyl; or, (ii) R^1 is COR^4 where COR^4 is the hydrochloride salt of an amino acid or a dipeptide and R^2 and R^3 are independently hydrogen, C_{1-10} acyl, or C_{1-10} alkoxycarbonyl ; and, hydrates, solvates, clathrates thereof; with the proviso that at least one or R^1, R^2 and R^3 is not hydrogen.

2. A compound according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is COR^4, and R^4 is $CH(R^5)NH_3^+$ Cl or pyrrolidin-2-yl, R^5 is selected from the group consisting of $CH(CH_3)_2$ and $CH(CH_3)CH_2CH_3$, and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

3. A compound according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is COR^4, and R^4 is $CH(R^5)NH_3^+$ Cl^-, R^5 is CH_3, and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

4. A compound according to claim 1 wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently C_{1-10} acyl or C_{1-10} alkoxycarbonyl.

5. A compound according to claim 4 wherein the compound is: propionic acid 3S,4S-*bis*-propionyloxy-5S-(3-carbamoyl-[1,2,4]triazol-1-yl)-tetrahydro-furan-2S-ylmethyl ester

6. A compound according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is C_{1-10} acyl or C_{1-10} alkoxycarbonyl and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

7. A compound according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is hydrogen and both R^2 and R^3 independently are C_{1-10} acyl or C_{1-10} alkoxycarbonyl.

8. A compound according to claim 7 wherein the compound is:

isobutyric acid 2S-(3-carbamoyl-[1,2,4]triazol-1-yl)-5S-hydroxymethyl-4S-isobutyryloxy-tetrahydro-furan-3S-yl ester; or,

2,2-dimethylpropionic acid 4S-(2,2-dimethylpropionyloxy)-5S-(3-carbamoyl-[1,2,4]triazol-1-yl)-2S-hydroxymethyl-tetrahydro-furan-3S-yl ester

9. A method for modulating Th1 and Th2 immune activity comprising administering to a mammal a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 1.

10. A method according to claim 9 wherein R^1 is COR^4, and R^4 is $CH(R^5)NH_3^+ Cl^-$ or pyrrolidin-2-yl, R^5 is $CH(CH_3)_2$ or $CH(CH_3)CH_2CH_3$, and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

11. A method according to claim 9 wherein R^1 is COR^4, and R^4 is $CH(R^5)NH_3^+ Cl$, R^5 is CH_3, and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

12. A method according to claim 9 wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are independently hydrogen, $C_{1\text{-}10}$ acyl or $C_{1\text{-}10}$ alkoxycarbonyl.

13. The method of Claim 9 wherein the compound is delivered in a dose of between 0.1 and 300 mg/kg of body weight of the patient/day.

14. The method of Claim 9 wherein the compound is delivered in a dose of between 1.0 and 100 mg/kg of body weight of the patient/day.

15. The method of Claim 9 wherein the compound is delivered in a dose of between 1.0 and 50 mg/kg of body weight of the patient/day.

16. The method of claim 9 wherein the mammal is a human.

17. The method of Claim 9 further comprising at least one other immune system modulator.

18. The method of Claim 17 wherein the immune system modulator is an interferon or chemically-derivatized interferon.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the chemically derivatized interferon is PEG-interferon-α-2a (PEGASYS®) or PEG-interferon-α-2b (PEG-INTRON™)

20. The method of Claim 9 further comprising a administering at least one other antiviral, antiparasitic or anticancer compound.

21. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to claim 1 and at least one pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and optionally containing excipients.

22. A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 21 wherein R^1 is COR^4, and R^4 is $CH(R^5)NH_3^+ Cl^-$, R^5 is $CH(CH_3)_2$, $CH(CH_3)CH_2CH_3$ or CH_3, and both R^2 and R^3 are hydrogen.

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